

Medicine

by OneShotFun

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Summary: After all the drama and uncertainty leads to a hasty hook-up, Spencer and Toby are forced to come to terms with what they really want from each other. [6B AU]

Medicine

\*\*A/N: My shipper heart is hurting so badly this season for Emison and Spoby! I honestly have so much hope for Spoby after seeing 6x14, though. Since some people might not have seen it by now, I'll spare you of the recap. But, their chemistry WAS off the charts in that episode, in my opinion. And so, I came up with a little 6B fic, out of the blue. As always, I suggest that you listen to the song. Not required, of course, but it's always fun to hear the soundtrack to the story, right? It makes it more show-like. Aaanyways... I've gone on too long. Hope you all enjoy, and leave a review!\*\*

\*\*WAIT, just saying, it's probably best to have watched up to 6x14, or you won't really understand it that well :/ It's in the context of late 6B.\*\*

\*\*Edit: LMAO. I totally stopped writing this... so, I only continued it after 6x20, and it was already 6,500 words in at that time. Well, hope you enjoy nonetheless.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p><em>Yeah you rid me of the blues<em>  
><em>Ever since you came into my life<em>

\_Cause you're my medicine\_  
><em>Yeah, you're medicine<em>  
><em>Yeah, you're my medicine<em>  
><em>You're medicine<em>

\_I, I wanna marry you\_  
><em>Said I, I adore you<em>  
><em>And that's all I have to say, bye-bye<em>  
><em>And you opiate this hazy head of mine<em>

**\*\*MEDICINE / THE 1975\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>Spencer eased herself slowly out of the little crook of his body that she had nuzzled herself into the night before. Upon waking up, she had almost forgotten. As soon as she felt the strong arms wrapped around her body, and looked over to her right to see a toned chest and a sleepy face, she remembered every small detail of the prior night. She knew it was probably wrong of her to be here, since she and <em>Caleb<em> ended things less than a week ago for this exact reason. But God, it felt so right to be in his arms again. It felt like she had come home, and that she had never left home to begin with. Nothing had changed. She still felt the same when he held her.

But nonetheless, it was still wrong for her to be here. She didn't want to be that girl. No, she had her fair share of relationships in high school, but she never wanted to be the kind of girl to play this game. Five years after graduating high school, and she was still acting like a high schooler. She shuddered to herself as she slowly sat up in bed, cautious not to wake him up. Taking a deep breath, she slid her skirt and top on. Taking the walk-of-shame after this was going to be an absolutely dreadful pain.

What was even worse was that his piercing blue eyes groggily began to open up from all the noise of her getting up and ready. God damn, she was just hoping to make a silent escape after their not-so-drunken one-night-stand. She felt like she was a backslider. Wasn't this relationship supposed to be a whole... three years ago?

"Spence?"

Oh, but she still got butterflies when he called her by her nickname. And that just went to show how much she acted like a little high school girl, getting the silly butterflies. Wasn't that what high school kids got when their crush even looked at them in class? Because that was what it felt like. He yawned loudly. She examined him carefully while he was yawningâ€”the cute little o-shape his mouth made, and the way his nose crinkled up. A small smile curled on the edge of her lips while she was watching him, but she quickly tried to fade it when he stopped.

He slowly brought himself to sit up on the bed. The only thing covering his most private parts was the blanket. A huge smile formed on his face when he was finally able to focus in on her. Reaching over, he offered her a hand. She knew if she took that hand, she was going to be sucked into something she wasn't so sure she would be able to stop.

But she swallowed hard and scolded herself to have some self-control when she stupidly accepted his hand. He pulled her back closer to him, and placed his hands on her cheeks. He pushed a strand of her brown locks behind her ear for her. Damn, he couldn't wipe that grin

off of his face. He seemed so happy.

"So, last night..." he trailed off happily, and used his spare hand to reach over to touch her hand gently. "I was not expecting that."

"Me neither," she agreed, but seemed hesitant to speak.

He wanted to make himself stop smiling like a giant idiot, but he couldn't. He just couldn't believe this was even happening, and that he was waking up to her beautiful face again. He could barely remember the last time he woke up to her. He could barely remember the last time his lips touched hers before last night. He felt like he finally had her back in his life, and he was never going to be stupid like he was before and let her walk away ever again. Never again.

He toyed with her fingers playfully, brushing his own thumb against each of her fingers. He looked up at her longingly before completely pulling her down to his lap, still only covered by the blanket. He closed the distance between them, raising his hands back up to her cheeks. She kissed back steadily for only a moment, and then retreated.

"What's wrong?" he asked. He felt a bit nervous to know. He knew her— he knew when something was wrong, and something was definitely wrong right now. Of course he wanted to know what it was, but at the same time, he feared that whatever it was would ruin them. He couldn't let something ruin them now. Not when he had just gotten her back.

"Toby," she swallowed, and got off of his lap. He knew this wasn't going to be good at all. "I, uh, I don't think the timing is right. At least not right now. Everything is so complicated. You haven't been apart from Yvonne for that long, and I—"

"You still have feelings for Caleb," he finished for her. He nodded his head sadly. "I get it. Once I lost you to him, I lost you for good." He stared at the floor with the saddest expression she had ever seen on his face. "If I'm being honest with you, seeing you with him has been the hardest thing I've ever had to deal with in my life. But I don't want to get in your way. If being with him is what you want, then... I'll have to get okay with it."

She furrowed her eyebrows.

"Why would you assume that?" she asked. "I never said it."

"I figured. I mean, I know you guys weren't together super long, but I also know that it was real," he explained. "You two only ended things less than a week ago. It's hard to let feelings go in less than a week, Spence. They developed over a long period of time."

Her eyes scanned him for a moment. God, she missed this. She missed being so close to him. She missed that signature scent of his that she could smell so well when she was pressed against his body. But the timing really wasn't right. She wanted to say she was completely over Caleb already, but it really hadn't been long enough to say that. And the feelings she had for him weren't some fake, 'I-need-to-get-over-Toby' feelings. They were genuine, and they

developed after being friends for a long time. Jumping into bed with Toby right after her break up was definitely going to hurt Caleb, whether he admitted it or not.

She knew Caleb would do that thing that both Hanna and Toby did when they found out about their relationship. They pretended like they were completely okay with it since they were in their own respective relationships, but everyone knew it was killing them. Caleb, regardless of what the situation was with Toby, was a really great friend. They had some fun memories together, and he got her in a lot of ways. She didn't want to lose him a friend to this, either. It would definitely piss him off to discover that he was right about it the whole timeâ€” that she really did have feelings for Toby. He was right about why she deleted the text message about Toby never putting a ring on her finger, and he was right about why she couldn't seem to take her eyes off of Toby and Yvonne every time she saw them in town. And why she commented on it, and kept wondering aloud whether Toby was going to propose or not.

Not to mention, Toby was minutes away from proposing to his girlfriend until she showed up in town again. If he was ready to marry somebody, there was no way he could get over that person in such a short amount of time. Of course Spencer ached to be with him again, and go back to that place they were in before everything fell apart in their relationship, but things were going to get complicated. The last thing she wanted to do was jump back into a relationship if he still had remains of feelings for Yvonne, and if she still had any feelings whatsoever for Caleb.

"I.." she bit her lip. "I think we should get some space from each other."

His head moved back, slightly appalled. He tried to nod his head understandingly, but the idea of more space seemed ridiculous.

"Space?" he questioned, trying not to reveal how disappointed he really was. "I mean.. three years apart wasn't good enough for you? You need more space from me?"

"Toby, what we did last night was a little spontaneous, and the situation we're in right now is complicated," she defended herself. "We both need time to figure out what we really want. And you were practically trying to push me out of Rosewood and send me back to D.C. when I first got here!"

He swallowed hard.

"Okay," he said, and nodded his head. "Space it is. Take all the space you need."

She wasn't sure if he was being bitterly sarcastic. It seemed as if he actually agreed with her now, and meant it. Maybe he realized that they really did need space to understand the situation and what their next move would be. She patted his shoulder lightly, and smiled at him as she backed out of his apartment.

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><p>"You didn't come home last night."<p>

Spencer's heart raced in shock when she saw Caleb standing in the Hastings' kitchen. She pressed her hand against her heart to show relief that it was just him. She had almost forgotten that he was still living in her barn. It was the exact opposite of what she wanted to happen to their friendship, but after their romance ended, they hadn't been spending much time together at all. They saw each other in the Hastings' house every now and then, but one-on-one time was strictly to work together on her mother's campaign. If she had to define it, she'd call it \_space\_.

"I.. uh, I crashed at a friend's," Spencer explained to him, although she didn't know why she even felt obliged to answer him. It \_wasn't\_ obligatory. She and Caleb weren't together anymore. She didn't have to answer him if she didn't want to.

"Oh," he nodded, popping an apple into his mouth. "Any chance that friend was Toby?"

Spencer chewed on her lip before saying, "We were just hanging out." Then, she noticed the duffle bag peeking behind the kitchen island and raised her eyebrows upon the sight of it. "Caleb, are you leaving?"

He flickered his eyes up at her wearily.

"Yeah," he admitted, scratching his head. "I wasn't sure how I'd tell you, but I.. uh, I think it's best if I do."

"Please, you don't have to do this just because of what happened between us," she told him, stepping forward. "Come on, we're still friends now, aren't we? We told each other that we would always be friends, even if things didn't work out."

"Me moving out isn't about us being friends," he shook his head. "I can't keep staying here and mooching off of your place. Your mom's campaign is almost over. The election is in a few days. I won't be working here much longer. It's time I get on my own feet and find myself a place to live." He swallowed hard and added, "Besides, it's weird.. I mean, after everything."

"Weird how?" she questioned, folding her arms. "You were staying here even before we got together, when we were just friends."

"But that was when we still had a thing for each other!" he argued, shaking his head again. "We were never... \_just \_friends. Not since Madrid. There was always something between us, and I was waiting for it. I kept waiting. The more time I spent with you, the more it grew."

"Caleb," she sighed, running her fingers through her bangs. "Caleb, you can't do this to me. \_You \_were the one that broke it off with me. \_You\_ were the one that said you don't want to do this anymore, not me. I was trying to make it work."

"Because you were never really mine when we were seeing each other, Spencer!" he practically yelled. "Ever since you heard about Yvonne's existence, you weren't all in with me. Don't you think I wanted to make it work, too? I just couldn't do it when part of you wanted to be with him the entire time. Part of you was jealous as hell every

time you saw them together in public, and you know it."

"That is not your decision to make for me. You are not the one who should be telling me who I'm jealous of. That should be me, and nobody else. It was your jealous mind and jealous assumptions that made you end it with me," she fired back, feeling herself getting much more heated than she intended this to be. She wanted to stay calm with him. She didn't want this to escalate, but it kept going further. And it didn't feel like it was going to stop any time soon. "You never even asked me if it was true. You just assumed, and told me you can't do this anymore. How is that my fault?"

"Because it's true!" he cried. "God damn it, you know how much I care about you, but it's so true that it hurts me to say it. You know I'm not stupid. The way you look at him... You think I don't see it? You think I miss it?"

"He was the first guy I ever really loved. He was my first real boyfriend. Of course there's always going to be something special about us, but that doesn't mean I haven't moved on," she shook her head.

"Okay," Caleb sighed, setting his apple down on the kitchen counter. He stepped forward so he was much closer to Spencer. "Okay," he repeated, gazing right into her eyes. "Look me in the eyes, Spencer," he told her.

She did as he said. Her brown orbs met with his, and she swallowed hard.

"Look me in the eyes and tell me you don't still love him.. or still have real feelings for him," he demanded. "Do this, and I'll drop it. Do this, and we can talk about us again."

Her lip quivered when he asked her to do that. She didn't even know why, but tears began to well up in her eyes. She didn't want him to know, or it would be so obvious. She thought about Toby. God damn Toby Cavanaugh...

"Pretending not to love you was the hardest thing I've ever done."

She remembered that moment crystal clear, despite all the years that had passed since that moment.

"All I want you to know is that... you're never alone."

Her heart pounded faster. So loud and fast that she was pretty sure Caleb could hear it.

The world felt like it was spinning when his arms were around her.

"Oh, Spencer. I know who you are. You never have to say you're sorry."

She kept remembering things. She kept thinking about even the smallest moments. She felt the way his fingers brushed against her skin. The way his lips traveled down her neck. The way he'd carry her to the bed. The way he'd build her stuff with his carpentry skills.

The way they'd lock themselves away in the backseat of the truck she'd gotten him and let their lips do all the talking. The way he'd wrap his arms around her and make her feel like nothing in the God damn world could hurt her. The way he looked up to her, and raved about her to everyone as if she was going to dominate the world some day, because he really believed she would. The way he'd lace his fingers into hers. The way his eyes met with hers. The way they hugged each other when they reunited, and held on like they never wanted to let go.

God damn it. How could she say she didn't love him right now?

Because even after being broken up for over three years, he looked at her the same way he did when they were crazy high schoolers in love. He had been her support system through everything. He was her stable rock. He always let her know that he would give anything in the world up for her happiness. He let her go and be with Caleb even when it was killing him every day to see them together. He didn't say a word.

"That's what I thought you were going to do," Caleb breathed through his nose. He ran a hand through his dark brown hair and backed up from her. He picked his duffle bag up from the floor.

"Caleb..." she mumbled.

"No, Spencer," he shook his head. "It's okay. It's for the best."

She stared at the floor.

"I didn't want it to end this way," she croaked out, and finally let the tears fall from her face.

His face softened. He realized he was being too hard on her. God, he never wanted to be that guy to her. He was always vying to be the good guy that would never hurt the girls, but he felt like he was losing that trait. Despite everything, he knew he was always going to love Spencer, even if it was just as a friend. She was an amazing, brilliant woman. Above allâ€”being co-workers and being in a relationship-type thingâ€”they were friends. It was true, they did agree to not let this thing ruin their friendship if it didn't work out. He felt like a bit of a dick for letting it go that way where they ended up not being friends at all after their thing ended.

He wanted her to be happy. And clearly, she was happy to some extent with him, but never completely. It was true that he was able to light up her face and make her laugh. He made her happy so many times that other people couldn't. But he also knew that a part of her was dying when she was forced to see Yvonne and Toby together. She thought she moved on, but some of her heart was still with Toby. Caleb, so badly, wanted to get every part of her, but he saw the way her face fell when she saw them together. He was never going to have her one-hundred percent. Not the way Toby had her.

That killed him. He knew he deserved better, too. A girl that gave him her all, and didn't give her ex a look that said too much to be friendly. She deserved better, too. She deserved to be with somebody that she wanted to give her all to. He felt like he should have

known. Spencer and Toby had too much history to ever really be over, especially since they initially ended in a way that didn't close off the opportunity for being together again in the future.

They were Spencer and Toby. Wasn't it inevitable?

He should have known when he saw the way Toby looked like a lost puppy after finding out that Spencer had a thing for Caleb. The way he planned to propose to Yvonne, until he saw Spencer again... The way he was practically shoving Spencer out of Rosewood because it was so hard for him to focus on moving forward with his life when he had to see her every day.

"I don't hate you," he spoke up, gripping onto the golden doorknob tightly.

She tilted her head and sarcastically spat, "Gee, thanks. \_That's\_ reassuring."

He looked up at the ceiling for a moment and let out a breath.

"I mean, I want you to be happy," he explained. "It's going to be hard going back to being 'just friends' with you, but I'm not going to lose you from this. We had a lot of fun together before things got so complicated between us. I don't want that to stop just because I'm being douchey. You can't control who you have feelings for. I know you didn't want to hurt me."

"I would never want to hurt you," she said, nodding her head repeatedly. "Never."

"I know," he smiled weakly. "And I would never want to hurt you. So I'll stop... being like this." He pushed his lips into his mouth and nodded his head back, and then began to twist the doorknob. She watched carefully as he took one step out of her door.

"Hey... Caleb?" she called before he could leave.

"Yeah?" he turned around one last time.

"We did have a lot of fun together.. you know, before everything got so hard," she agreed, leaning against the counter. She looked at him admiringly. He really was a great guy.

The smile formed on his lips again. He gave her a last gazing glance before ducking out the door and shutting it. She sighed. She had grown used to him living in the barn, so it was going to be different for him to be gone. But she knew it was for the best. And she knew where her feelings were now.

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><p>Spencer kept her word on the plan of keeping her distance from Toby. She needed some time to resurface and get back on better terms with Caleb again, at least as friendly as they could ever be again. She asked him to hang out a few times over the period of time she had space from Toby. She still hadn't told him that she had slept with Toby, though. That was news for a different time.<p>

Space was good.



Through the time where they had space, she really did figure things out. Caleb was like a brother to her. She was always going to love spending time with him. But the thing was, she also figured out that she needed Toby in every way possible. She had tried so hard to forget about him after their break up, and she thought she was finally over him when she found solace in Caleb. After running into Toby again in Rosewood, she knew she was so wrong. If he was really just her first puppy love from high school, it wouldn't have been this way. She tried to spend time with him as just a friend since she knew he was serious about Yvonne, but it wasn't working. The more time she spent with him, the more she was falling back in love with him, if she had ever even stopped. It was more like she had masked what she felt. The mask just felt so real that she thought it was really her.

She loved him. She always had.

She wasn't sure when the right time was to tell him, though. She knew what she wanted, but she didn't think he did. Part of her still believed that he had feelings for Yvonne. He was about ready to propose for her. And even if he wasn't able to propose because he saw Spencer again, they still had to be pretty damn serious if he wanted to marry her.

She decided to go buy herself a cup of coffee from the Brew to keep herself distracted. It was going to be difficult, though. She needed to figure the entire situation out fast. Her mom's campaign had already ended, and of course, she won. That meant Spencer didn't really have a reason to be in Rosewood anymore. The police had dropped the case against the girls, at least for now, for Charlotte's murder. They didn't have to stick around unless the police made them suspects again in the case. People were going to wonder why she was still in Rosewood.

Truth was, she was waiting to find out what Toby had to say about the whole situation. It was funny... he wanted her to go back to D.C. so badly so they didn't have to deal with trying to be friends, but now, she was only staying in town for him.

She opened her door, ready to get into her car and drive off to the Brew for her coffee, but was instead stopped by the tall figure of Toby Cavanaugh standing there. His mouth hung ajar. He scratched his head nervously.

"Toby..." she said, taken aback.

"H-hi..." he greeted, fidgeting with his hands. "I was about to knock."

"Oh," she stared at the floor. "What are you doing here? I was uh... I was just about to go to the Brew for coffee. You can, um, you can come.. if you want."

"Not necessary. I figured you'd be in the mood for coffee. I mean, when aren't you in the mood? You're Spencer," he laughed, and quickly walked over to his car. He pulled out two cups of coffee, and handed her one. "It's from the Brew, too," he told her as he handed her the cup.

"Wow," she smiled. "Thank you. Saved me the gas money."

"Mhm," he nodded his head.

"Right, so, back to that thing.. what are you doing here?" she asked again, slowly bringing the coffee cup up to her lips, but not letting her eyes leave his face.

"The other day, you, uh, you asked me what I want," he reminded her. "And what I want is to show you something."

She raised her eyebrows curiously.

"You can bring the coffee, of course," he laughed, and gestured for her to come. "Come on," he urged. "It's important, I swear."

She was trusting him on that one. And she couldn't deny the curiosity that had surfaced inside of him from his surprise visit. She gripped onto the coffee cup tightly as she followed him towards his car. Like the gentleman he had always been, he opened the car door for her, smiling brightly as she slid inside to seat herself. He shut the door for her and made his way over to the other side to climb into the driver's seat.

"You're confusing me," Spencer told him as he turned the key in his car to start it up.

He chuckled quietly.

"What fun would it be if I told you what I was going to show you?" he asked, glancing over at her.

Their eyes caught each other when he glanced at her, leading to a much longer moment where their eyes locked. Without overthinking it, Spencer reached over to place her hand on top of his hand, which was freely placed on the barrier between their seats. A small smile emerged on Toby's face as Spencer allowed herself to grip his hand and give it a light squeeze.

Their hands finally parted ways when he had to begin driving. The car ride was pretty long. On their way to whatever place they were going to, Spencer noticed a sign that said, You are now leaving Rosewood. This wasn't just some quick trip; he really had something in mind. She swallowed hard. It was exciting, but it scared the living hell out of her at the same time. The road they were taking began to become familiar to her. She had driven up here a couple of times to see Toby, more frequently when she had just gotten back from Washington D.C.

"Toby... are we going to yourâ€" "

Before she knew it, he parked his car.

"Yeah, we are," he nodded his head, and climbed out of the car.

He came over to her side to open the door, and then reached out to give her a hand so she could get out easier. They walked together for about a minute before the massive sight appeared. She hadn't noticed it before since the tall trees were blocking the way, but it was there. It was there, and it was beautiful. It was like a dream.

"You finished it," Spencer concluded, walking closer to the building. She ran her hand down the frame of the door, smiling to herself. He had done a phenomenal job with this thing. "You really finished it, Toby," she smiled wider.

"I did," he nodded his head.

What bothered her a little bit was that this whole thing was supposed to be for Yvonne. What was he trying to tell her? That he had finished the house, and now could win back his ex-girlfriend slash almost-fianc   Yvonne? It didn't seem fair to bring her all the way down here to show her what he wanted to give another woman. Was this supposed to make what he wanted clear to her? Because she wasn't receiving the message at all. In fact, she was even more lost than she had been before.

"What is this supposed to mean to me?" Spencer asked curiously, a hint of bitterness in her voice. And Toby felt the change of mood. Initially, she seemed happy for him, but he was sure that she was thinking about how the house was for Yvonne. It only made sense. "Why are you showing me your ex-girlfriend's gift?"

"I'm not finished explaining," he chuckled. "Don't get so bitter on me. Come on."

She furrowed her eyebrows, but continued following him when he opened the door to the house. There wasn't a whole ton of furniture in it, but it had the necessary appliances. Ideas of decorations filled Spencer's head when she saw it, but a knot formed in her stomach when she realized that Yvonne was supposed to be the one that had fun choosing decorations to jazz the place up with Toby. It was never intended for her.

There were a few papers on the dining table, which he grabbed. He returned to her side, and handed her them. Their fingers grazed gently during the exchange. She looked up at him nervously. She needed this paper to explain everything. And she felt like it would. Toby wasn't an unreasonable guy. He wasn't stupid enough to take her all the way up here just to tell her that what he wanted was to give Yvonne the house.

"This is a sketch of a house I started making in 2011, about a year into our relationship," he told her. Spencer furrowed her eyebrows, analyzing the sketches. "I got lost along the way, but I kept on working on it. I kept on working on it once you left for college, and I kept on working on it after we broke up." He swallowed hard before continuing, "It was the house I thought we could live in together... the one we'd have a future together in. The one we'd start a life in."

"Toby..." she muttered, shaking her head nervously. Her jaw was trembling.

He gently guided the sketches out of her hand, setting them back on the table. Her whole head was facing the floor, struggling to look up, but he helped her by placing his hand on her chin and pulling her head back up until their eyes could meet again.

"Everyone gets lost in their life at some point," he explained.

"Truth is, I started working on this house long before I met Yvonne. I was working on it after we broke up, but part of me always believed we'd come back to each other some day. And that some day, we'd live in this house together and start the real life I imagined in my head."

What she could make sense of in her head was just telling her that the house wasn't for Yvonne. These plans were for her. He wanted to give her the house all along. He thought she'd come back to him some day, and that they could move forward in an even more serious way. After they broke up, he had faith that she'd come back. But she didn't, and that was when he met Yvonne. That was when he gained the courage to try and move on from her, and try to imagine his life in this house with another woman.

"It might sound crazy, but this is what I want, Spence," he confessed, the sincerest smile she'd ever seen on his face forming at the same time. "You are what I want."

"I feel lightheaded. Am I dreaming?" she laughed through the stinging of tears forming in her eyes.

"This is not a dream," he chuckled, and laced his fingers with hers. "I think you feel the same way as I do. I really hope you do." He rubbed his thumb against the back of her hand gently before continuing, "It may be a little dumb because it's been so long since we've been together, but..." His eyes locked with hers again, and he swallowed hard before mustering up the courage to say, "I'm still in love with you, Spencer. I always have been, and I always will be. I never stopped loving you. I kept trying to recreate what we had with Yvonne, but nothing will ever compare to us. At least not for me."

Her heart was beating faster than it ever had before. She thought she had figured it all out a while ago, but everything really seemed to be piecing together at this moment. This was what she wanted all along. She, like Toby, had gotten lost along the way, too. It was only natural that she tried to move on during the large amount of time that she wasn't with Toby. That didn't mean what she felt for Caleb was meaningless, though. He was so important to her, and everything she felt for him was genuine. It wasn't to get back at Toby. It was her trying to be happy, which was what she always had wanted.

But at this moment, she knew the only thing that could ever make her feel as complete and happy as she wanted to be was Toby. She tried to fight off the feeling and make it go away, but it wouldn't stop. She wanted to feel complete with Caleb so she could just settle down and be happy, but that stupid heart of hers got in the way, as usual.

"We have a complicated thing going on right now, I know. The whole situation has been so damn messy with Hanna, Caleb, and Yvonne, but I've come to terms with what I feel. I've accepted that I'm never gonna be able to let you go, even if I wanted to. So I'm gonna embrace it," he said, squeezing her hand. "You asked me what I want, and it's this. It's you, and it's me, and it's this house, and it's us together. It's everything with us. I'm ready to take on anything for us." He took a deep breath and continued, "I used to be the sad boy that sat alone at lunch and got shaving cream shoved in his

locker. I was the sad boy that felt like he had nothing to live for. But somewhere along the way, the grand scheme of thingsâ€” the Alison, the murders, the A... I found my medicine. I found the cure to my life, and the one thing in this world that matters the most to me. And that's you, Spencer. It's you. It could never be anybody else, and I'm sure of how I feel about you. It's the surest thing I've got."

He took another deep breath.

"I'll spend the rest of my life trying to protect you from anythingâ€” \_anything\_ that comes our way. And I know I was the boyfriend that ran away when things got hard, but not anymore. Right now, it's hard, but I'm not running. I'll never do it again. Every problem, the smallest and the biggest, I wanna stand by your side," he declared. "I think you're the love of my life, Spencer. I fell in love with you when I had nothing to live for. And I've come a long way since then, but the one constant in my life is my love for you. I wanna spend the rest of my life with you."

She noticed his Adam's apple bobbed as he pulled something out from behind his back. She was pretty sure she knew what was about to happen, and her whole body felt numb. She couldn't believe this was probably going to happen. She felt weak in the knees, almost paralyzed.

"T-Toby?" she breathed as she saw it.

It was in his handsâ€” the ring; the box. She had never seen him happier than when he kneeled down on the ground of the house he had built. He popped the box open, and she could really see the ring now. It was gorgeous, and it wasn't the same ring he purchased for Yvonne.

Toby thought he was ready to propose to Yvonne and start his life with her, until Spencer came back to town. When she came back, it troubled him. How could he propose? He second-guessed the whole thing. He knew it was wrong to marry Yvonne when he was so bothered by the fact that Spencer and Caleb were having a thing. Like the idiot he was, he kept pressing that Spencer could go back to D.C. Not because he didn't want to see her again, but because things were easier when she was far away. He was able to be with Yvonne without second-guessing everything. When Spencer came back, he wondered if it was what he built the house for: the fact that he always thought Spencer would return to him someday.

"Spencer Hastings, will you marry me?"

The smile on her face was unfathomableâ€” far more radiant than any smile she'd ever had before. Tears kept rolling down her face, and she mentally praised herself for wearing waterproof mascara that day. She could picture herself sitting in this house with Toby, raising their children together. She wasn't ready for that lifestyle while she was in college, but if she had learned anything about herself over the years, it was that she never wanted to be the career-driven woman that cared more about furthering herself than loving those around her.

"This isn't impulsive... not for me, it isn't," he told her, rubbing his thumb against the elegant box. "My mother gave me this ring when

I was a little kid, and she told me to give it to the most important woman in my life. From the moment we first started dating, I've known that it was you."

A silence filled the air. He kneeled there for several moments, fearing that she was really going to say no. He didn't know what he would do if she said no. He didn't know if he could ever find somebody else to fill that void.

"Yes," she suddenly cried. "\_Yes\_!"

He laughed loudly. "\_Yes\_?"

"\_Yes\_, Toby... marrying you. Oh God, yes," she clarified.

He stood up and slid his mother's ring onto her finger, uncontrollably smiling as he did so. He tucked the strands of her hair behind her ears, and brushed his thumbs against her cheeks as he stared into her eyes with every ounce of love inside of him. Undeniably, he could say that this was the best moment of his life so far... the moment that Spencer Hastings agreed to become his wife. But he knew all the moments he was going to share with her as they moved forward together were going to just keep on competing.

Finally, he closed the distance between their lips. He kissed her without holding back, releasing all the feelings he had to suppress while he forced himself to move on from her and be with Yvonne, and while he forced himself to watch Spencer move forward with Caleb without saying anything about it. He finally got what he had always wanted, and that emotion was released into this kiss.

She had so much she wanted to tell him, and so much that she wished he could have heard over the years. The realization that she had the rest of her life to give Toby every vivid description of what he had missed and whatever would happen in her future... \_that\_ was an overwhelming feeling.

"What do you say you show me the master bedroom in this place?" she joked suggestively, lacing her fingers with his. "As your future wife, I think it's important that I see it before we go any further with the wedding preparations."

He chuckled and pecked her lips once again. He squeezed her hand and began walking backwards to the master bedroom.

"I hope you like it," he told her, "because this is going to be \_our\_ room for hopefully... the rest of our lives."

Slowly, he turned the knob and pushed the door of the bedroom open. She tried so hard to keep her smile minimal, but her mouth felt stuck in that 'incredibly-big-idiot' kind of grin. She knew they had so much to face, such as the moment that Caleb and Yvonne found out, telling their friends, planning the wedding, sorting out any remaining issues they needed to discuss in their relationship, but honestly, Spencer had never been more sure that they would be able to get through it all together. It wasn't like the time they dated in high school. This time, they were in it for the long run. They were going to do it right. They were going to take all the mistakes they made from the first time around and use those mistakes to better this

one.

Toby continued walking backwards towards their bed, and pulled Spencer on top of him. He pressed his lips against hers gently, grinning as he did so.

He stopped for a moment to touch her smooth hand, bringing it up to his lips. He touched the ring, which fit perfectly on her finger. Then, he kissed her hand, admiring the way the ring looked on her... not his girlfriend, not his friend, not his ex-girlfriend... his fiancée.

He was going to marry the hell out of this woman.

End  
file.